

Message Text

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CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-20 IGA-02 MC-02 ACDA-19

DRC-01 /106 W

----- 049028

R 100635Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4891

INFO SECDEF

DA

DSAA

DOD

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 JIDDA 3902

DOD FOR ISA

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MASS, SA

SUBJ: SANG MODERNIZATION: ORGANIZATION, EQUIPMENT, AND CONTROL

REF: (A) TIAS NO. 7634 "NATIONAL GUARD ORGANIZATION

PROGRAM 3/19/73; (B) STATE 29659

SUMMARY: AS DOD PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SANG PROJECT
PROCEED WE SHOULD TAKE SERIOUSLY OUR SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES WHILE DISPLAYING MAXIMUM TACT IN DEALINGS WITH PRINCE ABDULLAH. PRINCE SHOULD BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITY REVIEW LIST OF COMPANIES LIKELY TO BE APPROACHED BY DOD, WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT SELECTION OF WINNING BID TO BE MADE BY US. US SUPERVISORY TEAM SHOULD BE LIMITED TO TWENTY OFFICERS WHO WOULD SUPERVISE MODERNIZATION OF SIX MECHANIZED INFANTRY COMPANIES." ORGANIZATION AND TRAINING AT BATTALION LEVEL WOULD BE BEST DEFERRED UNTIL COMPANY TRAINING SUCCESSFUL. PURCHASES OF EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDED BY PROJECT MANAGER APPEAR SOUND; TOURS OF DUTY FOR MEMBERS OF US SUPERVISORY TEAM SHOULD BE FOR MINIMUM

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OF TWO YEARS AND FAMILIES SHOULD BE INCLUDED. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY SUBMITS FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS ON US IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR AGREEMENT TO MODERNIZE SANG; THEY DERIVE IN LARGE PART FROM BRIEFING PROVIDED EMBASSY AUGUST 25 BY COL. THOMAS A. MORT, PROJECT MANAGER, UPON COMPLETION OF 45-DAY IN-COUNTRY SURVEY OF NATIONAL GUARD OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES. EMBASSY COMMENTS WILL FOCUS UPON THREE AREAS: ORGANIZATION, EQUIPMENT, AND CONTROL.

2. CONTROL: EMBASSY NOTES THAT FIFTH PARAGRAPH OF REF AGREEMENT SPECIFIES THAT US AND SAG CONCUR IN NEED FOR US "TECHNICAL AND SUPERVISORY ASSISTANCE" FOR EFFECTIVE MODERNIZATION OF SANG. TO THIS END BELIEVE THAT PROPER DISCHARGE OF OUR SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY IS IMPORTANT TO EFFECTIVE INITIATION AND CARRY-THROUGH ON PROJECT. IN COURSE OF AGREEMENT'S IMPLEMENTATION, INSTANCES WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ARISE WHERE PRINCE ABDULLAH'S POSITION AND REQUESTS DO NOT ENTIRELY ACCORD WITH US INTERPRETATIONS OF WHAT IS BEST FOR GUARD DEVELOPMENT. IN THESE INSTANCES SOME FLEXIBILITY ON OUR SIDE MAY BE REQUIRED. AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, WE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT SAG PRESSED GUARD CONTRACT ONTO US BECAUSE OF KING FAISAL'S BELIEF IN USG. ACCORDINGLY, WHILE WE SHOULD DISPLAY MAXIMUM SENSITIVITY AND TACT IN DEALING WITH PRINCE ABDULLAH'S WISHES, WE SHOULD ALSO IF NEED BE DEMONSTRATE SELF CONFIDENCE IN OUR OWN JUDGMENT. PRINCE ABDULLAH AND GUARD OFFICIALS MAY STILL LOOK WISTFULLY AT OTHER OFFERS, ESPECIALLY THAT OF FRENCH, WHO WE UNDERSTAND MADE ABSOLUTELY FIRST-CLASS SALES PITCH TO ABDULLAH FOR GUARD CONTRACT DURING HIS VISIT TO FRANCE IN JULY. IN VIEW, HOWEVER, OF KING'S POSITION AND OTHER HIGH-LEVEL ASSURANCES WE HAVE RECEIVED THAT SAG PREFERS TO WORK WITH US IN ITS MAJOR MILITARY PROJECTS, WE THINK IT MOST UNLIKELY THAT OUR PROPOSALS FOR SANG DEVELOPMENT CAN BE OVERTAKEN BY MORE ENTICING BIDS FROM ANOTHER SOURCE. (IT IS LIKELY, WE FEEL, THAT KING FAISAL'S UNWILLINGNESS TO PRESCRIBE ON MATTERS RELATING TO EQUIPMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF GUARD DUE TO KING'S BELIEF THAT USG ITSELF IS IN THE END BEST QUALIFIED TO MAKE SUCH DETERMINATIONS.)

3. A SECOND ASPECT OF SUPERVISORY ROLE WILL BE SELECTION
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OF SUBCONTRACTOR TO IMPLEMENT USG'S MODERNIZATION PACKAGE. BEFORE SPECIFICATIONS AND REQUEST FOR BID ARE SENT OUT BY DOD, RECOMMEND LIST OF COMPANIES LIKELY TO BE CANVASSED BE SUBMITTED TO PRINCE ABDULLAH FOR CONSIDERATION. EMBASSY WOULD INFORM HIM THESE ARE FIRMS THAT -- ON BASIS OF REPUTATION AND EXPERIENCE -- MAY BE ASKED TO SUBMIT BIDS ON GUARD MODERNIZATION. SHOULD ANY BE EXCLUDED FROM CONSIDERATION? PRINCE MAY, BECAUSE OF SOME PERSONAL FACTOR, EXCLUDE

ONE FIRM OR ANOTHER; WE WOULD SEEK HIS ASSURANCE THAT REMAINING FIRMS BE REGARDED AS ACCEPTABLE TO HIM AND TO COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, AND KING. IT WOULD BE MADE CLEAR TO HIM ALSO THAT DOD WOULD THEN SEEK BIDS FROM REMAINING FIRMS AND THAT SELECTION OF WINNER WOULD BE MADE BY DOD. GIVEN HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES USG IS UNDERTAKING FOR SUCCESS OF PROGRAM, IT WOULD SEEM VITAL THAT A FIRM BE CHOSEN IN WHOSE CAPACITY TO PERFORM WE HAVE FULL CONFIDENCE.

4. THIRD, EMBASSY STRONGLY SUPPORTS COL. MORT'S RECOMMENDATION TO LIMIT US SUPERVISORY TEAM TO TWENTY OFFICERS; IT WOULD BE BEST IF REQUIREMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT PERSONNEL FOR BOTH CONTRACTOR AND SUPERVISORY TEAM COULD BE INCLUDED AS PART OF PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS. THIS APPROACH WOULD PROVIDE MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY FOR CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION (AND MINIMIZE PRESSURE ON MILITARY MANPOWER CEILINGS).

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CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-20 IGA-02 MC-02 ACDA-19

DRC-01 /106 W
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DOD FOR ISA

5. ORGANIZATION: TO MAXIMIZE CHANCES FOR PROGRAM'S SUCCESS NUMBER OF GUARD UNITS TO BE MODERNIZED SHOULD BE LIMITED, AND LEVELS OF ORGANIZATION THAT THIS MODERNIZATION EXPECTED TO ATTAIN KEPT AS SIMPLE AS POSSIBLE. IN REF (B), PARA III (A)

DEPARTMENT STATED, "INITIAL EMPHASIS FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION... SHALL BE GIVEN TO PLANNING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT TO BATTALION-SIZED TASK FORCES..." FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS AT POST WITH OFFICIALS FROM DOD IN MARCH, LATTER PHRASE CHANGED TO READ, "SIX MECHANIZED INFANTRY COMPANIES (EQUIVALENT TO TWO BATTALION-SIZED UNITS) OF THE SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL GUARD." EMBASSY NOTES THAT IN GUARD'S DISCUSSIONS WITH COL. MORT'S TEAM, SAUDIS EXPRESSED STRONG PREFERENCE FOR FORMATION TWO MECHANIZED BATTALIONS. TO AVOID POSSIBLE CONFLICT BETWEEN TERMS REF (A) AND GUARD'S DESIRES WE WOULD SUGGEST REAFFIRMING THAT INITIAL GOAL OF PROGRAM TRAINING AT COMPANY LEVEL. SAUDIS COULD BE TOLD THAT ORGANIZATION AND TRAINING AT BATTALION LEVEL WILL ENDEED BE CONSIDERED, BUT CANNOT PRECEDE CREATION OF THEIR COMPONENT PARTS: SOUND MODERN COMPANY STRUCTURES.

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6. SUCCESS OF PROGRAM WILL DEPEND VERY MUCH ON ACCUMULATED EXPERIENCE THAT US TEAM IS ABLE TO ACQUIRE AND RETAIN ABOUT THEIR BEDOUIN CLIENTS. FOR THIS REASON IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT HOUSING AND OTHER FACILITIES FOR US SUPERVISORY TEAM BE SUFFICIENTLY COMFORTABLE AND ATTRACTIVE TO PERMIT OFFICERS TO BE ASSIGNED TO SAUDI ARABIA FOR ACCOMPANIED TOURS OF NOT LESS THAN TWO YEARS AND PREFERABLY THREE. RIYADH NOW HAS AMERICAN COMMUNITY OF MORE THAN 550 AND THIS NUMBER WILL SOON GROW BY ANOTHER 200 OR SO. CITY IS BECOMING STEADILY MORE MODERN IN APPEARANCE. STORES WELL STOCKED WITH CONSUMER GOODS, AND -- GIVEN PROPER QUARTERW AND SOME AUGMENTATION IN RECREATIONAL FACILITIES US OFFICERS AND FAMILIES COULD LOOK FORWARD TO PLEASANT AND INTERESTING ASSIGNMENTS WITH GUARD PROJECT.

7. EQUIPMENT: FOLLOWING DISCUSSION WITHIN EMBASSY WHICH INCLUDED DATT AND VISITING COLONEL GEORGE MALONEY OF DOD, WE CONCUR THAT MAJOR EQUIPMENT PURCHASES PER "BATTALION-SIZED UNIT" SHOULD BE MODERATE AND REALISTIC. (EQUIPMENT INCLUDES AMONG OTHER ITEMS, 89 ARMORED VEHICLES PER EACH BATTALION-SIZED UNIT, 143 RADIO SETS, 64 WHEELED VEHICLES, PLUS VARIOUS QUANTITIES SUB-MACHINE GUNS (9MM), RIFLES (7.62 MM), MORTARS AND LIGHT AND HEAVY MACHINE GUNS.) IN VIEW OF US POLICY NOT TO SELL MOBILE GROUND TO AIR ROCKETS TO ANY MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRY, WE SHOULD NOT RECOMMEND INCLUDING RAPIER MISSILE FROM UK IN ANY NATIONAL GUARD BUY. MODA PRINCE SULTAN MIGHT OBJECT, ARGUING THAT GUARD'S MISSION DOES NOT REQUIRE ORGANIC AIR DEFENSE CAPABILITY SINCE BOTH IN CITIES AND IN FIELD NATIONAL GUARD UNITS WOULD ENJOY AIR COVER PROVIDED BY REGULAR SAUDI ARMED FORCES. AS REGARDS TOW, MOREOVER, WE NOTE THAT ALTHOUGH IT OFFERED TO MODA, LATTER HAS NOT YET ACCEPTED. GUARD ALREADY HAS

CONSIDERABLE QUANTITY OF 106 MM RECOILLESS RIFLES, AND TOW MISSILE THEREFORE PERHAPS UNNECESSARY AS WELL AS POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FRICTION WITH MINISTRY OF DEFENSE.

8. WE CAN EXPECT ABDULLAH TO BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN EARLY PURCHASES OF EQUIPMENT AND BELIEVE IF HIS DEISRES CAN IN SOME DEGREE BE ACCOMMODATED IN THIS REGARD, THEN HE WOULD BE LESS CONCERNED ABOUT SPECIFICS OF GUARD'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. WE WOULD NOT OBJECT, THEREFORE,
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TO SOME SLIGHT INCREASE IN QUANTITIES OF HARDWARE PROPOSED FOR SANG, IF (A) EXCESS EQUIPMENT CAN BE STORED UNTIL NEEDED AND (B) TOTAL VOLUME OF PURCHASE WOULD NOT BY IMPLICATION COMMIT USG TO MODERNIZATION PROJECT GREATER IN SCOPE THAN OUTLINED IN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.
THACHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, NATIONAL GUARD, MILITARY PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973JIDDA03902
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS THACHER
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: JIDDA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730946/aaaabhnm.tel
Line Count: 244
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) TIAS NO. 7634 "NATIONAL GUARD OR, GANIZATION
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07-Jan-2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <23-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SANG MODERNIZATION: ORGANIZATION, EQUIPMENT, AND CONTROL
TAGS: MARR, MASS, SA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005